

# **Caldwell Parish Church**

## Future Focus Session 2 (21/11/2017)

### Facilitator's Report

#### **Introduction**

A total of 19 people attended the session which was held in the Mure Hall in Uplawmoor, and worked alongside Dunlop Parish Church.

The evening then began with a brief recap of the previous weeks' exercises as well as an explanation of the evening's proceedings.

#### **The Healthy Church Check Up**

The format for this session was then outlined. Thereafter, there was a time of reflection on the *Church Without Walls*' definition of a healthy church, based on six key characteristics. Each characteristic was defined and explained by Robbie, along with allowing a few moments for discussion. Before moving on to the next characteristic, each person gave a "score" for the church, the choices for which were "very weak", "weak", "strong" or "very strong".

The six characteristics were:

- **Integrity** (everything geared around Jesus and "walking the talk")
- **Body & Soul** (caring for the "whole person" and the whole church)
- **Open House** (welcoming to all and reaching out to the unchurched)
- **Growth** (in spiritual depth as well as numerically)
- **Local** (truly engaging with all areas of the community in a relevant way)
- **Love & Care** (genuinely caring for the needy - action over words)

There then followed a tea/coffee break, during which time the scores were translated into numerical form as follows:

Very Weak = 0  
Weak = 1  
Strong = 2  
Very Strong = 3

The limited choices discouraged "sitting on the fence" and helped to focus thinking. It should be pointed out that the scoring was private and all of the score sheets were completed anonymously. There were 19 score sheets returned.

The scores were tallied on a flip chart sheet and totaled up, to reveal the category with the highest score. With 19 participants, a minimum score would have been 0 and a maximum, 57 for each characteristic. Whilst these numbers may help as a guide to each characteristic's degree of "health", the ranking of the totals is more significant, as it gives some indication of the congregation's main strength and weakness.

The scores in this instance were quite close for some characteristics, but a perceived strength (top score) and a perceived weakness (bottom score) did clearly emerge.

After the tea break, the results were revealed by Robbie and they were as follows:

Love & Care	38
Local	38
Open House	33
Integrity	31
Body & Soul	31
Growth	26

The tally patterns can be seen in the image below:

CALDWELL PARISH CHURCH MIN = 0 MAX 57					
	VERY WEAK 0	WEAK 1	STRONG 2	VERY STRONG 3	TOTAL
INTEGRITY					31
BODY & SOUL					31
OPEN HOUSE					33
GROWTH					26
LOCAL					38
LOVE & CARE					38

We then worked in four groups and were invited to look at the strongest characteristic and suggest up to three Action Steps ("quick wins") that would help to build upon this perceived strength. Furthermore, the groups were also asked to suggest three measures to help address the weakest characteristic. The groups could decide amongst themselves which they perceived to be the strongest and weakest characteristic. The results for each group can be seen below.

### Group One

#### Strongest Characteristic: Local

Action Steps to be taken:

- 1) Follow up leaflet, reintroduce newsletter, make church seem like a fun place to be
- 2) Develop website and Facebook to advertise special services
- 3) Encourage school to be more integrated

#### Weakest Characteristic: Growth

Action Steps to be taken:

- 1) New younger Elders
- 2) Given Alison has 1 day per week for Uplawmoor, how can church members assist her to make the most of the time?
- 3) Visiting – how can we help the minister do this? Work on communication to establish who needs a visit

## **Group Two**

**Strongest Characteristic: Love & Care**

Action Steps to be taken:

- 1) Set up youth group
- 2) Outreach worker
- 3) Nurture Cradle Roll

**Weakest Characteristic: Growth**

Action Steps to be taken:

- 1) Praise band
- 2) More inclusive activities for new members
- 3) Elders becoming more proactive

## **Group Three**

**Strongest Characteristic: Love & Care**

Action Steps to be taken:

- 1) Evaluation of our visiting policy/practice

**Weakest Characteristic: Growth**

Action Steps to be taken:

- 1) "Messy Church"
- 2) More emphasis on studying God's Word
- 3) Introduce modern/contemporary worship as a complement to our traditional worship

## **Group Four**

**Strongest Characteristic: Love & Care**

Action Steps to be taken:

- 1) Pastoral Care Team
- 2) System of identifying need
- 3) Outreach, communication throughout the community

**Weakest Characteristic: Growth**

Action Steps to be taken:

- 1) Inviting members and others to take part/involvement in church
- 2) Closer links with the school and youth organisations
- 3) Open activities e.g. open Golf Day, open doors day, switching on of Christmas lights, etc.
- 4) Follow up of new members/baptisms to encourage involvement

Before the evening was brought to a close, Robbie gave opportunity to hear from the groups what they had come up with.

Robbie then drew the session to a close, reminding the group of the time for the third and final session, due to be held back in Dunlop on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> November.

*Robbie Morrison      Facilitator*